

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1271
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BELGRADE 4398

FOR EUR/RPM, EUR/SOV

FROM USDEL CSCE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CSCE
SUBJECT: BELGRADE CSCE MEETING: BILATERAL WITH SOVIET DELEGATION

1. SOVIET AMBASSADOR VORONTSOV, WHO HAS BEEN ADROITLY INFLEXIBLE IN FORMAL SESSIONS FOR LAST FEW DAYS (PERHAPS IN ANTICIPATION OF OUR MEETING) HOSTED WORKING LUNCH FOR AMBASSADOR AND TWO OTHERS (MARESCA AND CORIDEN) MEMBERS OF U.S. DEL ON JUNE 29. DISCUSSION RANGED OVER ALL ELEMENTS OF TASK BEFORE US HERE. ATTITUDES WERE EXTREMELY CORDIAL AND POSITIVE, BUT ON AT LEAST TWO SUBJECTS THERE IS CLEAR CONFLICT BASED ON PRESENT INSTRUCTIONS. THE LUNCH PROVIDED ANOTHER APPARENTLY MUCH-NEEDED OPPORTUNITY TO ASSURE SOVIETS THAT, AS SECRETARY VANCE HAS REPEATEDLY STATED, U.S. WILL HAVE CONSTRUCTIVE, POSITIVE APPROACH IN SUBSTANTIVE MEETING, WHILE INSISTING ON THROUGH EXCHANGE OF VIEWS.

2. THE THREE SOVIETS PRESENT (VORONTSOV, KONDRASHOV, AND
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KUTOVOI) WERE SAME ONES WHO MET WITH AMBASSADOR AND HUNTER ON JUNE 14. ENGLISH WAS ONLY LANGUAGE USED, AND ALL ARE FLUENT SO DANGER OF MISUNDERSTANDING WAS MINIMAL. VORONTSOV SUGGESTED THAT THE LUNCHEON WAS A WORKING SESSION AND THE MORE THAN 90 MINUTES WERE DEVOTED TO BUSINESS. THE U.S. POSITIONS WERE WELL KNOWN AS RESULT OF US/UK PAPER AND OUR INTERVENTIONS, SO BULK OF TIME WAS

DEVOTED TO EXPLANATION AND PROBLING OF USSR POSITIONS.

3. THE SITUATION ON EACH TOPIC FOLLOWS:

--AGENDA:

A. THERE WAS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT THERE WOULD BE:

- (1) OPENING CEREMONIES;
- (2) OPENING STATEMENTS IN OPEN PLENARY;
- (3) GENERAL DEBATE IN CLOSED PLENARY, COVERING THOROUGH EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON IMPLEMENTATION AND NEW IDEAS.

B. THE DISAGREEMENT BEGINS HERE, WITH SOVIETS HOLDING TO FINAL ACT LANGUAGE WHICH DOES NOT SEPARATE REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION AND NEW PROPOSALS. SOVIETS ADMITTED ONLY THAT THEY MIGHT CONVINCE MOSCOW TO DIVIDE IMPLEMENTATION FROM CONSIDERATION OF NEW PROPOSALS IN FORMAT, PROVIDED NOTHING WAS ADDED WHICH WAS NOT IN FINAL ACT (E.G., NUMBERS, LETTERS, OR TICKS). THEY REPEATEDLY STATED THAT ANY DELEGATION SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO DISCUSS PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE WITHOUT BEING RULED OUT OF ORDER AND WOULD FIND IT NECESSARY TO DO SO FOR A COHERENT APPROACH TO SUBJECTS.

COMMENT: THIS SEEMED TO BE A FIRM POSITION, AND WE DOUBT THAT SOVIETS WILL ACCEPT EVEN THE SLIGHT SEPARATION ALLUDED TO ABOVE AT THIS TIME. THE SOVIETS PROBABLY CALCULATE THAT THEIR PROPOSAL FOR SUCH A SLIGHT SEPARATION WILL GAIN WIDER SUPPORT AMONG OTHER DELEGATIONS AS AUGUST NEARS AND PRESSURES TO CONCLUDE PREPARATORY MEETING

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GROW. END COMMENT.

C. THE REMAINING AGENDA ITEMS (FUTURE MEETINGS AND CONCLUDING DOCUMENT) WERE NOT DISCUSSED IN DETAIL. HOWEVER, A REFERENCE TO EXPERTS GROUPS AFTER BELGRADE AND TOO MUCH SPECIFICITY IN ITEM ON CONCLUDING DOCUMENT ARE CLEARLY STILL PROBLEMS FOR THE SOVIETS.

--ORGANIZATION:

A. THE SOVIETS ACCEPTED OPEN PLENARY FOR GENERAL STATEMENTS, WITH THE RESERVATION THAT 20 RATHER THAN 40 MINUTES PER SPEAKER AMPLE.

B. SOVIETS ALSO ACCEPTED GENERAL DEBATE ON IMPLEMENTATION AND NEW PROPOSALS IN CLOSED PLENARY, AS OUTLINED IN US/UK DRAFT DECISION SHEET. THE CONCEPT OF ALLOTING CERTAIN MEETINGS FOR EACH "SECTION" (THE TERM "BASKET" WAS DECLARED TO BE ANATHEMA TO MOSCOW) OF THE FINAL ACT WAS NOT NOT CONSIDERED BY THE SOVIETS TO BE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BELGRADE 4398

FOR EUR/RPM, EUR/SOV

FROM USDEL CSCE

NECESSARY ON THE GROUNDS THAT EACH DELEGATION COULD TALK ABOUT ANY SUBJECT IT WAS INTERESTED IN. THE SOVIETS WOULD LIKE TO TARGET ABOUT SIX WEEKS FOR THIS DEBATE AND THE REJECTION OF ALLOTTED TIME FOR SECTIONS OF FINAL ACT DID NOT APPEAR TO BE A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE.

C. THE SOVIETS THOUGHT THE NEXT, OR COMMITTEE PHASE (WHICH SOVIETS INSIST ON CALLING WORKING GROUPS), COULD BEGIN ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY, AND CARRY ON IN PARALLEL WITH CLOSED PLENARIES, AND THAT THESE GROUPS SHOULD HAVE A FIRM MANDATE SO THEY WOULD NOT BECOME OPEN-ENDED DEBATING SOCIETIES. THEY COULD, VORONTSOV SAID, EVEN REPEAT CLOSED PLENARY DISCUSSION IF SOME DELEGATIONS PREFERRED. MANDATE COULD BE TO DEAL WITH THE PERTINENT SECTION OF THE FINAL ACT. SOVS SEEMED LESS RIGID ON THIS ASPECT AND AGREED TO CONSIDER SEPARATE WORKING GROUPS FOR PRINCIPLES, CBM'S, SECTION II, SECTION III, AND MEDITERRANEAN, WITH AD HOC GROUPS ON
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FOLLOW-UP AND DRAFTING OF CONCLUDING DOCUMENT, IF NEEDED. THIS EXCEEDED PRESENT INSTRUCTIONS, THEY SAID, AND MUST BE SOLD TO MOSCOW. THE CRITICAL DIFFERENCE HERE IS THAT SOVIETS WANT TO ESTABLISH WORKING GROUPS ONLY AS THE NEED FOR EACH GROUP BECOMES APPARENT

DURING SUBSTANTIVE MEETING, WHEREAS WE INSISTED THAT THEY MUST BE ESTABLISHED AT THE PREPARATORY MEETING. WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION, HOWEVER, THAT THE SOVIETS RECOGNIZE THE WEAKNESS OF THEIR POSITION IN LIGHT OF THE FINAL ACT'S LANGUAGE ASSIGNING THE TASK OF DECIDING MODALITIES TO THE PREPARATORY MEETING, AND WILL SEEK INSTRUCTIONS.

D. OPEN FINAL SESSION DID NOT SEEM TO BE AT ISSUE.

DATE AND DURATION:

A. THE SOVIETS SAID THAT THEY COULD BEGIN MAIN MEETING AT ANY TIME, THE SOONER THE BETTER IN ORDER TO ASSURE THAT THE MEETING WOULD BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE END OF 1977. THEY AGREED, HOWEVER, THAT WITH THE PRESSURE OF THE UNGA ON SMALL COUNTRY RESOURCES, SEPT 26 WAS PROBABLY THE EARLIEST PRACTICAL DATE. THE FIRM DURATION SEEMED TO BE THEIR HARDEST POSITION BECAUSE, IRONICALLY, THEY SAY THAT THEY FEAR A FILIBUSTER. NO REFERENCE WAS MADE TO U.S. AS A POSSIBLE PERPETRATOR, BUT MALTA AND COUNTRIES WANTING NEW PROPOSALS WERE CITED. THE SOVIET PREFERENCE IS FOR A CLOSING DATE WITH AN OPTION TO EXTEND FOR ONE OR TWO WEEKS, BUT IN ANY EVENT NOT BEYOND DEC 31, 1977. THEY SEE AN EXTENSION INTO 1978 AS AN OPEN-DOOR TO FOREVER. WE MADE IT CLEAR THAT WE DID NOT WANT A LONG MEETING BUT FELT THAT WE HAD THE FIRMEST POSSIBLE INSTRUCTIONS THAT THE MEETING SHOULD CONFIDENTIAL

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NOT END UNTIL THERE WAS A CONSENSUS TO CLOSE. WE ALSO NOTED THAT MANY OTHER DELEGATIONS WERE SIMILARLY INSTRUCTED. THE SOVIETS CLEARLY HAVE MADE WAY HERE AND INTEND TO FIGHT HARD ON DURATION.

BMRM ONE POINT OF AGREEMENT WAS THE NEED TO LIMIT THE MALTESE ON MEDITERRANEAN, BUT BOTH SIDES RECOGNIZED THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED. WE FEEL THE MEETING WAS A STRAIGHTFORWARD PRESENTATION OF VIEWS IN THE FRIENDLIEST SPIRIT. VORONTSOV IS EASIER TO DEAL WITH THAN KOVALEV, POSSIBLY BECAUSE HE UNDERSTANDS THE FRANK AMERICAN STYLE AND IS NOT SO SENSITIVE. THE SOVIETS INTEND TO PUT THEIR ORGANIZATIONAL PAPER ON THE TABLE SOON, PREFERABLY ON JULY 4, BUT BECAUSE THAT DAY WILL BE A CSCE HOLIDAY, THEY MUST SELECT ANOTHER DATE. WE BELIEVE THEIR PAPER WILL REFLECT MAXIMUM SOVIET POSITIONS CITED ABOVE AND THAT THEY WILL DEFEND IT STRONGLY. WE WILL PURSUE OUR INSTRUCTED AIMS AND SEEK A FURTHER BILATERAL MEETING WHEN APPROPRIATE.

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